



## DISCUSSION GUIDE: MARIAH'S STORY

Objective: Students will have the opportunity to connect with the people in the closest relationships with them.

**Option 1: Watch the entire video all the way through and have a conversation using these questions or ones that make sense for your students.**

1. Start by asking, "Is there anyone in your life that this video makes you think about? Can you reach out and connect with them right now?"
2. Allow time for students to text or call someone they are thinking about in the moment.
3. Use the questions below to engage in a rich conversation with your students focusing on student engagement. Lead the conversation with the whole group or have small groups answer each question and then share their answers.
4. It is vital that all students feel seen in this process so pay close attention to anyone responding in a way to the videos that is unexpected. Follow up with them after the discussion to ensure the video or conversation was not upsetting to them.

**Option 2: Play the full video once all the way through, then go back and play it again, pausing for conversation.**

1. At 1:35, pause and ask:
  - a. Have you had an experience with kind people getting walked on? Do you think being mean is a way to control a situation? Why or why not?
  - b. Do you see any patterns between what Mariah is saying about her emotions and her experiences?
  - c. When I listen to Mariah, I hear a lot of anger and a lot of sadness, how do those emotions come up for you? Do you think it is harder when adults are mean than when your peers are?
2. At 2:44, pause and take a deep breath with the students. Some students in your class will have had experience with suicide, others have not. Research shows that it is absolutely okay to talk about it and in fact, can help. Leave space here for students to talk with you or a counselor later if needed as well.
3. At the end of the video, continue the conversation using these prompts:
  - a. What emotions come up for you when you hear Mariah's story?
  - b. What parts of her story can you relate to? What parts are harder for you?
  - c. How do you think Mariah and her family feel about her sharing her story now?
  - d. Mariah talks about no one reaching out to her when she was lonely but losing Nate helped her to see that it is important to reach out as well. What types of things can we put in place to help remind ourselves to reach out to people? What is the hardest part of asking for help?
  - e. Forgiving others means letting go of the hurt they caused in your life, healthy relationships involve forgiveness. Do you think that Mariah needs to make amends with anyone or forgive anyone in her life? What types of things would be helpful to hear from someone if you are in the process of trying to forgive them?
  - f. Thinking back to last month, Luke mentioned that making intentional connections helps reduce loneliness, if you saw Mariah being mean, how would you reach out to her?

Extension: Each day this week, consider how you are treating others in your life and what emotions are leading those interactions. If you changed the way you looked at the world for a moment, could the interaction be more positive? Consider asking them what is going on to help you understand better.